



## WHO WE ARE

FOUNDED IN 1978, the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame is a 501c3 nonprofit that honors Alabama's jazz greats.

***We honor  
the pioneers  
who shaped  
jazz history,  
the players,  
the teachers,  
and the  
community  
leaders who  
gave rise to  
the art form.***



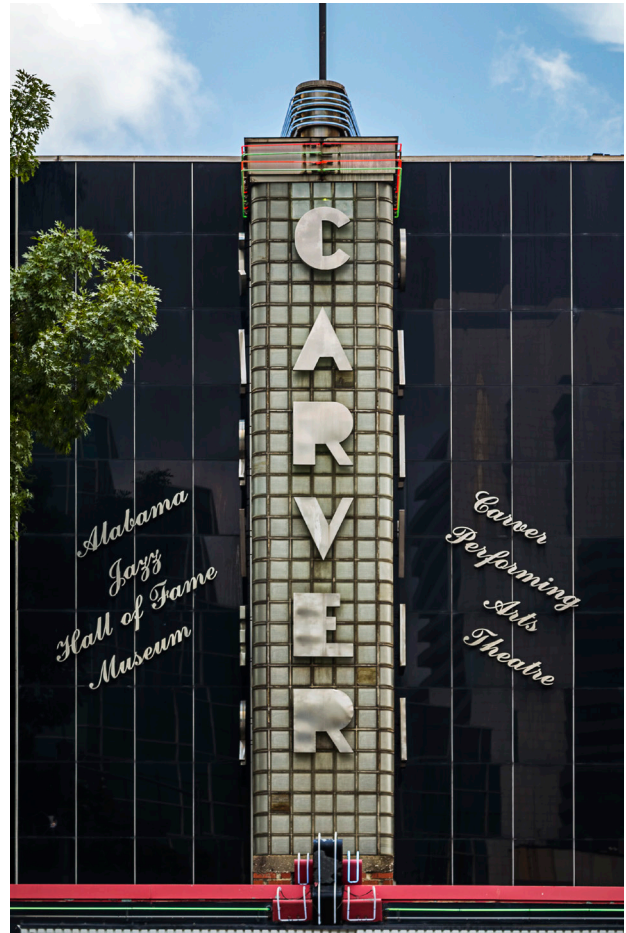
# ABOUT US

## HISTORY

The Carver Theatre opened in 1935 as a movie house. Located in downtown Birmingham's Fourth Avenue District, the theatre was one of few screening first-run films for African Americans during the days of segregation. It thrived for years, surviving the turmoil of the 1960s, only to close in the 1980s, when the city center was abandoned.

The Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame saw to reinvent the site, and in 1993 the Carver Theatre for the Performing Arts opened. Featuring over 2,700 square feet of permanent museum exhibits and a 515-seat theatre, the facility operated as a tourist site and nonprofit performing arts venue, available for public and private bookings.

For 24 years, the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame has steered the direction of the venue's development, presenting original, educational programming as well as community services. Under the leadership of the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame, the Carver Theatre has emerged as an indispensable asset to the community and receives over 30,000 visitors annually.



## FUTURE

In August 2016, after negotiations with the City of Birmingham, the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame secured \$4.3 million for renovation of the Carver Theatre. The renovated facility, which is twelve months from completion, will continue to operate as a tourist destination and nonprofit performing arts center. The Jazz Hall will have exhibits on display, and the recently acquired WAJH Jazz Hall Radio (91.1FM) will have its studio on the premises.



THE MISSION OF THE ALABAMA JAZZ HALL OF FAME is to foster, encourage, educate, and cultivate an appreciation of the medium of jazz music as a legitimate, original and distinctive art form indigenous to America. Its mission is also to preserve a continued and sustained program of illuminating the contributions of the State of Alabama through its citizens, environment, demographics and lore, and perpetuating the heritage of jazz music.

How do we accomplish our mission?

MUSEUM

RADIO

EDUCATIONAL  
PROGRAMMING

ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



# EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING



***We put instruments in  
idle hands.***

A MUSIC EDUCATION opens up new ways of thinking about the world.

Through learning how to play jazz, our students cultivate the skills necessary to meet tomorrow's challenges.

A jazz education teaches students how to be creative, how to collaborate, how to listen, and how to engage with others, both within and across cultures.

Our educational programs give underserved students the opportunities and resources they need to thrive.



# SATURDAY JAZZ GREATS

Every Saturday morning since 1999, the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame has offered free jazz instruction to aspiring musicians. We nurture young talent, putting instruments in the hands of the curious. Taught by jazz professionals, the program is one-of-a-kind. No similar program exists in our area.

Our students come from over 30 different neighborhoods and receive instruction at the beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels in music theory, jazz history, and jazz improvisation. Donated instruments are loaned to students in need, and past participants have gone on to receive prestigious academic scholarships or build successful careers in music.

Some former students, appreciating what the program has afforded them, have even returned to donate their time and teach.

# JAZZ MASTERS CLASSES

Every year, we present two master classes, each conducted by a professional jazz artist, at low or no-cost to participants. Students receive exclusive instruction from distinguished, professional musicians. Past artists have included: Esperanza Spalding and the Grammy nominated child prodigy pianist Joey Alexander.



# STUDENT JAZZ BAND FESTIVAL

In this annual, three-day event student jazz bands at the middle school, high school, and college and university levels perform before the public and their peers in an adjudicated program.

Though awards for "Band of Distinction" and "Outstanding Soloist" are given in each of the festival categories, the festival promotes collaboration over competition: participants may opt-out of receiving numerical scores in favor of comments only.

In addition, the festival presents a nationally renowned artist in concert, who also serves as clinician and leads a workshop that is open to the public. Past clinicians have included Lenny Kravitz's drummer, Zoro, and Rashawn Ross, the touring trumpeter for Dave Matthews Band.

There is never a fee asked of participating bands, and due to the wealth of talent represented at the festival many college and university band directors use it to recruit future band members.

In 2018, 21 jazz bands and 403 student musicians participated.

## FUN WITH JAZZ

This traveling program brings jazz fundamentals into the elementary classroom with free, one-hour lessons, tailored to augment each teacher's curriculum.

## JAZZ RECYCLING

As part of our commitment to giving underserved students access to resources, we accept donated instruments through our Jazz Recycling Program. Individuals and organizations may donate used musical instruments, which we then "tune up" and put in the hands of our band students. All donations are fully tax deductible.

# MUSEUM



PICTURED: "THE MAKER OF MUSICIANS" FESS WHATLEY & THE "JAZZ DEMONS"

*We safeguard the stories  
of Alabama's jazz heroes,  
honoring the artists who  
paved the way and the  
community traditions  
that created them.*



# ABOUT THE COLLECTION

Alabama has produced some of the most notable jazz musicians in the country. The first piano blues solo ever recorded was played by Birmingham-born Clarence "Pinetop" Smith. Dinah Washington hails from Tuscaloosa. Nat King Cole was born in Montgomery. Sun Ra, whose innovative work remains celebrated worldwide, was born and raised in Huntsville, and native Erskine Hawkins set the standard with his signature tune about Ensley, "Tuxedo Junction." The Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame honors these luminaries and more with exhibits that showcase their accomplishments.

Visitors take a journey through jazz history, from its humble beginnings in secular, folk traditions through its many contemporary incarnations. Honoring the sacred rituals that gave birth to the genre and the visionaries who kept it alive, the museum attracts not only jazz enthusiasts, but civil rights historians, students, and tour groups. Guided tours are available by reservation and walk-in visitors may access the public archives upon request.

While the Carver is under construction, the museum collection is in storage. Forty years' worth of archives and artifacts, including Ella Fitzgerald's dress, instruments, memorabilia, and various personal effects, are being re-evaluated to prepare for new exhibits in the renovated venue. Volunteer interns from Jefferson State Community College's Sigma Kappa Delta National English Honor Society have agreed to digitize, catalog, and update all archival records for the Jazz Hall's 245 inductees.

The renovated museum will also share exhibit space with the Birmingham Black Radio Museum, now in development. Graduate students from the University of Alabama's School of Library and Informational Studies (SLIS) are chronicling, cataloging and preserving information and materials related to the history of black radio in Birmingham.

The story of jazz music is a story of hope. It is a testament to the power of people to overcome adversity with grace. Envisioned as the musical complement to the nearby Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame museum shares the joyful stories of resilience, underscoring the civil rights movement.

BO BERRY



# JAZZ HALL RADIO

91.1 WAJH

## *The Voice of Jazz in Alabama*



In May of 2018 we acquired Birmingham's only dedicated, jazz-exclusive radio station, WAJH 91.1FM.

Formerly owned by Samford University with a jazz format since the 1980s, the station reaches radio listeners throughout Greater Birmingham and a worldwide audience online.

Jazz Hall Radio plays both classic recordings and new releases, with a focus on Alabama artists.

Enhancing our mission, the station plans to showcase the work of our students and share the stories of Alabama's jazz visionaries.



# ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING

***Presenting  
inspired  
new works  
for all  
tomorrow's  
patrons***

WE SEEK  
EMERGING  
ARTISTS with bold,  
new visions of the  
world.

We offer a  
range of original  
programming in all  
of the performing  
arts, from spoken  
word to swing dancing.

CLEVE EATON





# JAZZ JAM SESSIONS

In that great tradition unique to jazz culture, our monthly jazz jam sessions invite musicians to play together or "jam" in a group improvisation session. A cherished addition to downtown nightlife, the sessions attract a wide audience of locals and tourists, and sometimes a few celebrities.



DANIEL "JOSE" CARR PERFORMS AT JAM SESSION

## SPOKEN WORD OPEN MIC: On Stage at the Carver

Every third Sunday we invite local poets and writers to perform their original, literary works before an audience "on stage at the Carver." Last October marked the 12-year anniversary of this event, making it is the longest-running spoken word, open mic night in Birmingham.

# THE TASTE OF FOURTH AVE. JAZZ FESTIVAL

This one-day, outdoor jazz festival is held on the last Saturday of August in Birmingham's historic Fourth Ave. District, known for being a bustling enclave for black businesses and culture during segregation. Launched in 2003 to celebrate the legacy of the neighborhood, the festival features local and international artists on a main stage, and a diverse selection of commercial booths and food vendors participate.

Fifteen years later, in collaboration with Urban Impact, Inc., the Fourth Avenue Merchants Association, and the City of Birmingham, this one-day festival has turned into a beloved community event, presented every summer at no cost to attendees.

Artists who have participated include: Bobbi Humphrey, Kim Waters, Ben Tankard, Norman Brown, Euge Groove, Paul Taylor, Ronnie and Deborah Laws, Michael Ward, Joey Summerville, Gabbie McGee, Dee-Lucas, DieDra Young, the Birmingham Heritage Band, Foxy Fatts & Company, Bo Berry, and the Neo Jazz Collective.

## FILM SERIES

As one of the main venues for the annual Sidewalk Film Festival, the Carver Theatre has welcomed many emerging, independent filmmakers in its history.

We are dedicated to giving underserved populations opportunities to see their stories on the big screen, and in March of 2017 we negotiated with Magnolia Pictures to screen the first run film *I am Not Your Negro*, about the unfinished work of James Baldwin. In a first-of-its-kind screening for the area, we ran the film for a month, and by the end of the run screenings were near sold-out.

We have also produced multicultural film festivals, including a tribute to the works of Harry Belafonte, who participated in a discussion with the audience after the screening of his 2011 documentary *Sing Your Song*.

# INDUCTION CEREMONY

Every three to five years, the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame welcomes new inductees in a grand ceremony. Inductees are nominated by the community and selected by a special committee. In December 2015 eight artists were inducted, including Birmingham native Marion Evans, who won a Grammy Award for his arrangement of the album *Cheek to Cheek* featuring Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett.



# COMEDY NIGHT

This event gives up and coming local comedians the opportunity to hone their craft on stage for a live audience. Comedians receive instruction in professional comedy techniques, and promising participants are invited to perform as part of the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame's regular comedy series.



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

***We connect jazz artists  
to each other and the  
community.***



OVER FORTY YEARS, we have cultivated many rewarding relationships with neighboring institutions.

# *better together*

We have worked with the following organizations:

## BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S THEATRE (BCT)

In 2016 a Jazz Hall Inductee hosted a pre-show performance for the full run of BCT's original stage production about jazz history in Birmingham, "Tuxedo Junction." Children explored jazz instruments in a musical "petting zoo" and were introduced to the Jazz Hall's educational programs. 7, 233 students participated.

## BIRMINGHAM AREA CONSORTIUM FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (BACHE)

In partnership with Samford University, the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame participated in a cultural passport program. Students with passports gained free access to participating arts institutions and received a stamp upon visiting. The program served to enhance learning outside the classroom.

## BIRMINGHAM CULTURAL ALLIANCE PARTNERSHIP (BCAP)

This after school program connects 200 inner city youth and their families to the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and its community partners. As a partner, the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame hosted students for four weeks, during which students learned about the history of jazz and its culture. At the end of the program, students participated in a recreation of a jazz juke joint and performed jazz standards and Savoy style dance moves for an audience.

## BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM OF ART: LANGSTON HUGHES PROJECT

This multidisciplinary project introduced students to Langston Hughes and the Harlem Renaissance. Jazz musicians, incorporating spoken word and video footage, brought Langston Hughes' epic poem, "Ask Your Mama: 12 Moods for Jazz," to life. Schools were given study guides and each presentation included a pre and post show discussion.

## ALABAMA DANCE COUNCIL & ABRAHAM.IN.MOTION

As part of the Alabama Dance Council's Festival of Dance, we sponsored two student workshops with American choreographer Kyle Abraham ([abrahaminmotion.org](http://abrahaminmotion.org)). Held at the Alabama School of Fine Arts, the workshops explored storytelling through modern dance and were led by Abraham and his company. Abraham also performed his original, award-winning dance *The Radio Show*.

# Who do we serve?

**420** ZIP  
**CODES**  
**+30K** ANNUAL  
**VISITORS**

Jazz is a music born of difference.

It has something for everyone, and our audience reflects that, attracting a wide range of patrons from multiple segments of the population.

1,160  
ARTISTS

9 PK-12  
Programs  
Created

**25** **UK** **USA**  
**COUNTRIES**  
**GERMANY** **ITALY**  
**AUSTRALIA** **BRAZIL**  
**FRANCE** **DENMARK**  
**JAPAN** **SWITZERLAND**  
IMMIGRATION  
OF KOREA



# Building Tastemakers

MANY EMERGING ARTISTS started their journeys at the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame.



***We help  
creative  
artists  
bloom.***

2014: THE FILES ARTS PROJECT, a dance intensive led by Alvin Ailey-trained professionals, had its first run at the Carver. Since then it has flourished, returning to Birmingham every year.

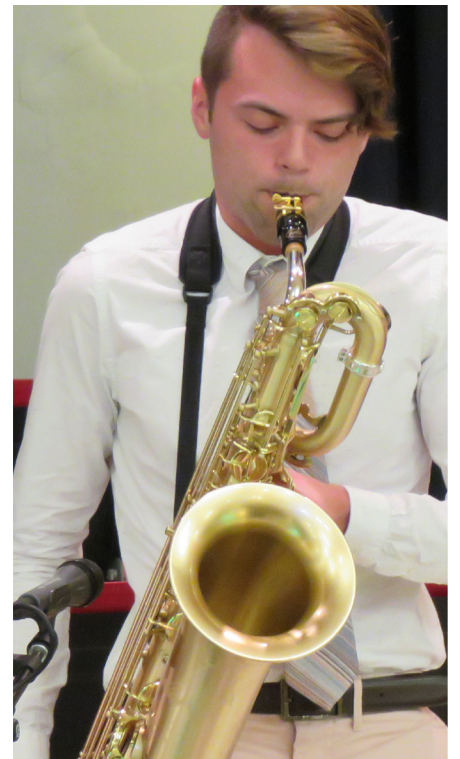
2014: We sponsored the premiere of Ryan Jamaal Swain's original one-man show *A Negro Writer* based on the text of Langston Hughes. Swain now stars in the 2018 FX television series *Pose*.

2003: Before he was an American Idol winner, Rueben Studdard and his band *Just a Few Cats* performed at the Carver. Their annual Christmas concert remains a Carver Theatre tradition.





*help us  
inspire  
the next  
generation  
of jazz  
greats*





## Looking Forward

By protecting our cultural assets, we are building the city's character.

Jazz is an indigenous art form, sacred to America.

We honor its heritage so the next generation may take pride in what came before and better envision what lies ahead.

## CONTACT US:

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**JAZZ** BRINGS  
PEOPLE  
TOGETHER





**CARVER**  
PERFORMING ARTS THEATRE